

THE
**FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS**

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: LECL

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail is a place of many locations and of many, diverse people who ensure the stewardship of the cultural, natural, and historic resources of the Trail; where the best environmental practices are employed; where visitors of all abilities can enjoy the outstanding recreational values of the Trail in the great outdoors; where adults, seniors, and especially children can connect with the natural and cultural histories through interpretive and educational opportunities from multiple perspectives; and where federal, state, and local partners are trained for excellence in achieving the vision.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Stephen E. Adams, Superintendent

Site: LECL

STEWARDSHIP

☒ Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The trail runs 4,600 miles through 11 states. There are federal, tribal, state, local, and private jurisdictions involved, along with the related partners. There are many natural, cultural, historic, sacred, and sensitive resources. There are also many resource issues such as loss of habitat, encroachment of development, and the spread of invasive species. There simply are not enough administration and management staff to provide adequate monitoring and assessment of resource conditions, much less threats. The volunteer program would be expanded to increase the monitoring and assessment of conditions of and threats to resources along the trail. Volunteers from the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation chapters and other partners would visit trail segments, inform trail administrative and management staff of issues, and assist in gathering information in a variety of formats such as photographs, GPS coordinates, and standard forms developed for resource types. The volunteers could also assist in mitigation efforts and in repair of infrastructure such as footpaths and water access points.

☐ The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

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ENVIRONMENT

☒ Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The L&C NHT winds from eastern forests through the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains to Pacific NW rainforests. Numerous agencies monitor environmental conditions in this area, but none present all available data through a single contact. Trail administration would serve as a "clearinghouse" of information for the trail corridor using enterprise database systems under federal development. A monitoring program would also be developed for sections of the trail not currently monitored to provide a complete environmental profile along the trail. These data would support research on both local and widespread threats, such as industrial or residential development and global climate change. Trail staff would coordinate with professionals from partner agencies at all levels on research and problem resolution development; develop a cadre of volunteers from the Foundation, youth groups and other partners to perform local monitoring; and collaborate with academic researchers. Resulting information would contribute to interpretive and curricular materials addressed under "Education." There would be close ties to programs described in each of the other goals, for example, the Ranger Academy.

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RECREATION

☒ Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

A Trailwide program, tentatively named "The Ranger Academy," to connect children with nature would be established. This multi-disciplinary youth program would be developed through partnership with the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, which has chapters in all of the official Trail states, and with professionals in the fields of recreation and child psychology. We envision that by working with the local chapters, many different communities could be reached to obtain the diversity of participation desired; it would be open to all children with an interest and commitment, and no separation by gender, orientation, ethnicity, or other status would be sought or allowed - we seek true inclusion. The purpose of the academy would be to get young people outdoors in natural settings and involve them in resource and recreation management under the mentorship of active conservationist adults and the tutelage of program professionals. The program could serve as a model for Servicewide adoption.

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EDUCATION

☒ Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Throughout the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition many educational products were created; - from the individual state's curricula to interactive websites; and from children's theatrical plays to federal agency programming. It is not enough that these were created and became very popular during the bicentennial, but they must continue to be used, updated and made available to the teachers and students of our nation.

This program takes a comprehensive look at the products and educational services created during the last five years and builds a Trail-wide educational program that strives to maintain the momentum of learning beyond the bicentennial of the Corps of Discovery. It engages the educational offices of the Trail's 11 states, the First Nations, and Indian Education - and it pulls in curricula, programs and activities of other federal agencies - making them available through the NPS. This effort is to ensure that these products do not fade but are updated, enhanced and used for the benefit of the educational communities.

The Trail staff along with the many educational partners would work to create innovative online resource for teachers across the nation.

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EDUCATION

☒ Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

☒ Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

We live in a world that is connected online, attached to cell phones, plugged into iPods and navigated through GPS units. Generations M, X and Y are captivated with myspace.com, youtube.com, reality shows and American Idol. Unfortunately all this connection disconnects these generations from experiencing the importance of nature and the environment in their lives. How do we compete in one of the most competitive arenas for a person's time and re-connect them to the outdoors? We don't! We embrace today's world and technology and experience an extraordinary introspectiveness of the natural world.

We will design a program that uses technology to draw children into nature. It takes the virtual world of what they know and challenges them to explore a place, concept and/or activity in the natural world, some independently of any interaction with others and some tied to the programs and exhibits of the NPS and our partners along the Trail.

In a sense, it uses the technology to map an experience in nature.

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PROFESSIONALISM

☒ Model what it means to work in partnership.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Along the 4600 miles that make up the Lewis and Clark NHT there are hundreds of federal, state, local and private partners. These partners are the true managers of the land and protectors of the resources. They directly serve the visitor and provide education and interpretation on a daily basis. They are the historians, the Tribes, the stewards of the Trail.

This goal is designed to establish a Training Institute to serve myriad of partners. The training program will be multidisciplinary and will include topics such as compliance, habitat monitoring and restoration, interpretive skills, non-personal services, visitor center operations, volunteer management, curriculum use and design, youth program development, and diversity outreach.

The model is envisioned as an institute to be housed at various strategic locations along the trail. Instructors will come from the LECL staff supplemented by federal agency partner specialists and other subject matter experts along the trail.

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